

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation

جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية "الراي"

Bhutto's widow, daughter freed

KARACHI, April 8 (R) -- Pakistan's military government tonight freed the widow and daughter of executed Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto after having detained them for six months. Their release came on the eve of an expected High Court judgement which would cancel the detention of Begum Nusrat Bhutto and Miss Benazir Bhutto by overruling a martial law edict for the first time. The two women were told they were free by jail authorities who visited their Karachi home. Within minutes the armed militia surrounding the residence were removed and Miss Bhutto and her sister Sanam drove away to visit their relatives. Begum Bhutto and her daughter Benazir now lead the late prime minister's Pakistan People's Party (PPP), which is the main focus of opposition to the military government. The release had been demanded last weekend by the opposition centrist Tehrik Istiqlal Party, whose policy-making body met in defiance of President Zia's ban on all political activity.

Militia free UNIFIL hostages

8 (R) -- Right-wing Lebanese militiamen today freed hostages they had threatened to kill unless Irish troops withdrew from a village in southern Lebanon. A spokesman said the rightists had earlier Irish troops surrounding the village, sparking off battle within less than 24 hours. One Irish soldier was killed and one yesterday. He said the rightists had agreed after efforts involving several quarters, international Red Cross. He did not elaborate. The spokesman said that the release followed contacts with the militia which finances, arms and controls Lebanon under the control of renegade army major Saad Haddad between Maj. Haddad's forces and the Irish in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon when rightists moved into the village of Al Tiri border. The village is in a sector controlled by the

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Moscow accuses Washington of open aggression

gemony in Mideast policy

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can vote.

Mr. Peter Florin of East Germany, the other communist member of the 15-nation Security Council, observed that no one could hope to win the U.S. presidency who espoused the principle of Palestinian self-determination. "The election of a president comes to depend on the policy of colonial enslavement of another people," Mr. Florin said.

Mr. Yehuda Blum, the Israeli delegate, referred during the council debate to the PLO as a "group of murderers." Rejecting any negotiations with them, he said the debate was an attempt to set back the whole process of Middle East peace-making.

The PLO delegate, Mr. Zuhdi Terzi, who addressed the council again today, referred to President Carter's announcement of countermeasures against Iran yesterday following that country's refusal to release American hostages held for 160 days.

He said the U.S., therefore, should be able to understand the frustration of 4 million Palestinians, whose plight was 12,000 days old.

Mr. Terzi also noted that Mr. Carter invoked a Security Council resolution which was vetoed on Jan. 13 but had the support of 10 members. Yet he seemed to have overlooked the March 1 resolution on Israeli settlements, which was unanimously approved, including by the U.S., Mr. Terzi said.

The council adjourned without setting a date for another meeting on the Palestine question. This will be subject to private consultations among the members.

Mr. Blum also complained to the Security Council over yes-

terday's Palestinian attack on a Kibbutz in Upper Galilee and warned that U.N. members should recognise the implications of cooperating with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

"A heavy responsibility also rests with all those at the U.N. whose statements cannot but be viewed by the PLO as encouragement to continue to perpetrate its despicable crimes," Mr. Blum said in a letter to Council President Porfirio Munoz Ledo of Mexico.

Ambassador Blum, who did not request any action by the council, said three Israelis were killed, and 15 wounded, after five commandos seized two nursery buildings at Misgav Am. The commandos, who took a number of hostages in an attempt to secure the release of 50 imprisoned Palestinians, were later all killed by Israeli troops.

Meanwhile, Israel today cited the raid as a fresh reason for keeping a tight grip on occupied Arab land.

Prime Minister Menachem Begin told visiting officials of the American Jewish Congress in occupied Jerusalem that the raid was "a warning to us as far as our future security is concerned."

Israeli officials said the raid would stiffen Israel's determination, in negotiations with the United States and Egypt, to offer only strictly limited autonomy to Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza.

The prime minister's statement and the officials' remarks seemed to auger an ever firmer resistance by Mr. Begin, at his talks in Washington next week with President Carter, to any pleas for wider Palestinian autonomy.

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat today began his talks with President Carter in an attempt to remove obstacles blocking the autonomy negotiations.

His aides said the Egyptian leader is also anxious to address the Israeli Knesset on the issue.

President Sadat is reported to have told journalist Uri Ameri in an interview being published today in the Israeli magazine Haolam Haze of his wish to speak to the Knesset, as he did when he visited Israel in November 1977.

Saudi aide accuses U.S. of following 'shrouded in mystery' Mideast policy

JEDDAH, April 8 (R) -- Saudi Arabia believes U.S. election-year policy on the Middle East is "shrouded in mystery" and that Washington is duty-bound to establish peace in the region, the Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal, said today.

Prince Saud, in an interview with the newspaper Al Sharq Al Awsat, said Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and U.S. attempts to establish bases in the Middle East while still trying to resolve the hostage crisis in Iran had focused world attention on the Gulf region.

He said that Saudi Arabia had thanked the Soviet Union for supporting the Palestinian cause, but that support did not give Moscow the right to intervene in Afghanistan, nor should U.S. support of Afghan independence allow Washington to accept Israeli occupation of Arab lands.

"The intervention of a superpower on one side is met by the intervention of the other superpower on the other side," Prince Saud said. "The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan disturbed us. A superpower invading an independent country harms us directly by giving an opportunity for others to intervene," he added.

Iran and Arab countries around the Gulf faced common problems and if enemies created cool relations between them, it would not be in the interests of any of the countries in the area, the prince said.

Prince Saud said Washington's stand on the Middle East was "shrouded with a kind of mystery" because of the transitional feeling in the United States in a presidential election year. But "the United States has a basic duty towards the establishment of peace in the area not only because



Egyptian President Anwar Sadat (left) enjoys a laugh with President Carter at the White House Tuesday. Mr. Sadat went to Washington at President Carter's invitation in hopes of making a breakthrough on the stalled talks on Palestinian autonomy with Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin is scheduled to meet with President Carter next week. (AP wirephoto)

Iraq, Iran trade threats of war

BEIRUT, April 8 (AP) -- In a thinly veiled threat of war against neighbouring Iran, President Saddam Hussein declared today "Iraq is equipped to fight any kind of battle to defend its honour and sovereignty."

The official Iraqi News Agency said Mr. Hussein made the declaration during a cabinet session held in Baghdad to discuss the rapidly deteriorating relations between Iraq and Iran.

"Anyone who tries to raise his arm against Iraq will have his arm chopped," President Hussein was quoted as saying. "Iraq also is equipped to fight any kind of battle at the farthest point in the Arab World to defend the honour and sovereignty of the Arab Nation, too."

Observers interpreted this parts of his statement to mean that Iraq would go to war to recover three small islands at the entrance to the Gulf from Iran.

The islands of Abu Mousa, the Greater and Smaller Tunbs, were conquered by Iranian forces in 1971, when Britain ended its defence treaty with the Trucial Coast Arab sheikhdoms that controlled the strategically-located islets.

President Hussein's strong statement today came at the heels of reports that Iran has put its armed forces along the border with Iraq on alert.

Iraq's government-controlled newspapers said the Iranian military movements along the border "herald aggressive Iranian schemes."

Ayatollah Khomeini called today for the overthrow of President Hussein and said the Baghdad government was headed for "an early grave."

Relations between the feuding neighbours have reached breaking point with troops on both sides of the frontier on full alert and continuing reports of Iranian refugees pouring over the border from Iraq.

The ayatollah, in a statement broadcast on Tehran Radio, urged the Iraqi armed forces to desert "the imposed, inhuman and illegal regime of Baath (the ruling Iraqi party)."

Iran's revolutionary prosecutor meanwhile announced the arrest of 27 people accused of sabotaging Iranian oil installations and warned that those found guilty would be executed.

The official Pars News Agency reported from the border town of Dehloran that three Iraqi fighter aircraft had violated Iranian-air space over the region, one of the main areas of refugee influx, yesterday afternoon.

Some fighting was reported around the town of Sarpo-E-Zabeh, in Kermanshah province, where Pars claimed insurgents were shelling a Revolutionary Guards camp.

Accuses Washington of open aggression

Iran to deprive U.S. allies of oil if they join sanctions

TEHRAN, April 8 (Agencies) -- Iran accused the United States today of committing open aggression through its imposition of new sanctions and warned Washington's allies that they would be deprived of Iranian oil if they joined in the sanctions.

The ruling Revolutionary Council said the U.S. was using the 49 hostages held at the American embassy in Tehran as its excuse for the "overt aggression."

President Carter, who announced the sanctions and a break-off of diplomatic relations with Iran last night, was "trying to hide the imperialist interests of his government under the cover of the embassy hostages," the council said after hours spent in emergency session.

Oil Minister Ali Akbar Moinefar told a press conference that any country which joined the U.S. in imposing sanctions would be deprived of Iranian oil. His threat had special significance in view of reports that the United States was seeking backing from its allies.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who yesterday vetoed a transfer of the American embassy hostages to Iranian government control, said today he welcomed Washington's breaking of diplomatic relations with Tehran.

A statement from the revolutionary leader's office said: "If Carter has done one thing in his life which it can be said is to the benefit of the oppressed, it is this very cutting of relations between a nation risen for liberation from the grip of international plunderers and a world predator plunderer."

The Revolutionary Council spokesman, Mr. Hassan Habibi, said after a council meeting with governors-general this morning that the provincial officials had proposed declaring a state of emergency in the country. He said a council ruling would be announced later.

Acting Finance Minister Reza Salimi said today the economic sanctions against Iran would put its economy on the right track. "When there is pressure from outside, the people's solidarity

increases, and we hope that this pressure will lead us towards the right economy," he told Reuters in an interview.

But Foreign Minister Sadeq Ootbzadeh said the U.S. sanctions would not affect the situation of the hostages, who have been held by militant students at the American embassy for more than five months.

Mr. Ootbzadeh and the Revolutionary Council both called on Iranians to show self-denial, dedication and unity in defence of their country and the Islamic revolution.

The council said the world's superpowers could not tolerate the revolution's dedication to independence for Iran.

The United States today pressed a diplomatic drive for support from its allies for President Carter's sanctions against Iran and efforts to free the American hostages.

Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher said in a television interview that the United States wanted major allies to match some of the actions taken by Mr. Carter following the collapse of hopes for progress in the hostage crisis.

The United States also contacted a number of foreign governments to explain its policy and suggest specific steps they might take.

President Carter, saying he had been patient long enough in the face of intransigence by the Iranian government, expelled all Iranian diplomats from the United States and ordered them to leave by midnight tonight.

President Carter also embargoed all trade with Iran except small shipments of food and medicine, asked congress to make eight billion dollars in seized Ira-

nian assets available to pay claims against Iran, and cancelled all visas to Iranian citizens for future visits to the United States.

Officials briefing reporters said allied countries must understand that the policy of restraint they had urged on Mr. Carter had failed and they must now support Washington if they wanted to avoid more drastic actions he might take against Iran.

The feeling at the White House was that allies must stand by the president.

U.S. officials refused to say whether President Carter wanted other countries to break off relations with Iran or to cooperate in economic sanctions that would prevent the Iranian government from obtaining elsewhere the goods and credits they can no longer receive from the United States.

The first reaction of the Soviet Union to the Carter announcement was to call it high-handed and proof that the U.S. intended to continue a "policy of plunder" against the Iranian people.

The official Soviet News Agency Tass said Washington was motivated not by concern for its embassy staff "but by open imperialist interests."

"(It) is obviously looking for a pretext to whip up tension in the Near and Middle East," Tass said.

A contrasting reaction to Mr. Carter's action came from Japanese Prime Minister Masayoshi Ohira who said the break-off of relations was regrettable but understandable.

Foreign Minister Saburo Okita said Japan understands that the U.S. was compelled to act "when Iran is continuing a grave violation of international law and when there are few prospects for the early release of the hostages."



Washington police patrol Massachusetts Avenue in front of the Iranian embassy Tuesday in the U.S. capital. The embassy building can be seen in the background. Police have blocked off the street to all traffic after President Carter broke diplomatic relations with Iran and ordered all Iranian diplomats out of the U.S. by midnight Tuesday. (AP wirephoto)

India supports Cuban efforts to mediate in Afghan crisis

NEW DELHI, April 8 (Agencies) -- Cuban Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca today met Indian Premier Indira Gandhi and delivered a letter from President Fidel Castro on the Afghan crisis.

An Indian government spokesman declined to disclose details of the letter, but official sources said it was related to Dr. Castro's offer to act as a peacemaker in the dispute between the Afghan government and neighbouring Pakistan.

The Cuban minister also conveyed Dr. Castro's invitation to Mrs. Gandhi to visit Cuba.

Mr. Malmierca, who arrived here yesterday from Kabul, had a 50-minute meeting with Mrs. Gandhi during which they agreed, according to spokesman, that the non-aligned movement should continue efforts to find a solution to the Afghan tangle.

This apparently signalled India's support to the Cuban efforts, informed sources said.

The spokesman said Dr. Castro's peace initiatives were in his capacity as chairman of the non-aligned movement.

India had taken note of the reported Cuban initiative to bring about a meeting between Afghan President Babrak Karmal and Pakistan's military ruler, Gen. Zia Ul Haq, he said.

Mrs. Gandhi told the Cuban envoy that after an initial overreaction to the Soviet intervention the atmosphere in the region and improved because

of the dialogue between the non-aligned countries.

The Indian premier has been pressing hard for a political and diplomatic solution to the Afghan crisis, warning that a major military confrontation would be disastrous for the region.

Cuba has not officially commented on the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

Radio Pakistan said yesterday that Afghan rebels shot down a Russian helicopter last week killing two Soviet generals.

The radio, quoting "reports from Afghanistan", said an Afghan army divisional commander and two brigade commanders were also killed in the incident near Chaghani Sarai, in Afghanistan's Kunar province. It said the bodies of the dead officers were flown to Kabul. The report has not been confirmed in Kabul or Moscow.

The radio also said rebels fighting the Soviet-backed Afghan government attacked Kunar provincial headquarters at Asadbad last Wednesday night and killed 10 soldiers, destroyed several army vehicles and captured arms and ammunition.

It said the rebels offered very stiff resistance to a joint offensive of Afghan and Soviet troops who suffered "heavy casualties" in the Khogiani and Surkhrood areas.

Regional Briefs

1, April 8 (R) -- Arab League Secretary General today arrived in the United Arab Emirates from a fourth leg of an Arab tour, the official Emirates said. Mr. Kilbi said in an interview published today in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait had concentrated on a charter for the 22-member Arab League and plans to meet in Jordan in November. He told the Kuwaiti Rai Al Aam the new charter, replacing the one the league was founded in 1945, would give the Arab League greater powers and set up an Arab court of appeal to the international court in The Hague.

April 8 (R) -- A meeting of an Arab League committee to solve a dispute between Tunisia and the Libyan has been postponed, a senior Kuwaiti official was quoted today. The undersecretary at the Kuwaiti Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Rashed Al Rashed, told the Kuwaiti Rai Al Aam that the meeting, planned for next week, had been put off at the request of its chairman, Iraqi Minister Saadoun Hammadi. The committee, made up of the foreign ministers of Kuwait and Syria, and a representative of the Arab League secretariat, was formed after Tunisia accused Libya of masterminding a guerrilla Tunisian mining town of Gafsa. Libya denied the charge.

TON, April 8 (R) -- New Zealand is reopening its embassy closed last February after a break-in, Prime Minister Muldoon announced today. He said in a statement that Christopher Beeby returned to his embassy in capital last week. Mr. Beeby and members of his staff were taken from Tehran on security grounds after the embassy chancery in which documents were stored.

ril 8 (R) -- Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have agreed to deposit over \$2 billion deposited by Saudi Arabia and Egyptian banks, the deputy governor of the central bank, Mr. Ali Nigm said today. He declined to give settlement. Egypt froze the deposits in May last year for economic sanctions imposed on Egypt by Arab League for its peace treaty with Israel. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait deposited \$1 billion each. Saudi Finance Minister Ali Abal Khalil said last week that Egypt had released its Egyptian financial sources however said Saudi Kuwait had agreed not to press complaints they sent to the International Monetary Fund against the Egyptian freeze.

il 8 (R) -- Italy has blocked the delivery to Iran of big transporters and spare parts for Bell helicopters, produced by Agusta. Giovanni Agusta company officials said today that they did not think delivery of the American-made helicopters would be approved while hostages in the y in Tehran continued to be detained. Iran originally ordered 15 helicopters in a complicated deal involving the sale to Iran oil. About 15 helicopters were delivered before on, the officials said.

ril 8 (R) -- South Korea is expected to recognise the Organisation for the Liberation of Palestine (PLO) shortly, foreign ministry today. South Korea newspapers reported today that government planned to recognise the PLO next month. Ministry sources declined to confirm the reports but said South Korea's basic policy to improve relations with the PLO was expected shortly, they added. Government withdrew its embassy here in 1978 as a result of economic and political ties with Arab countries had been severed over the recent years. But two countries still have ties.



Thousands of anti-Castro Cubans and Cuban-Americans hold up their placards during a protest in front of the Miami City Hall Monday afternoon to show their support for the thousands of Cubans who have sought refuge in the Peruvian embassy in Havana. See story on page 6. (AP wirephoto)

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All-consuming matter

THE WRITER of a recently published travel book on "Arabia" notes that he had been wary of visiting Jordan "because I didn't like the look of its per capita GNP."

His point, which is then illustrated in his chapter on Jordan with some vivid (if not typical) characterisations of life in Amman, is that this "developing" country of ours had just gone through something of an economic "boom," exemplified by frantic building of houses and villas and something approaching an orgy of spending on luxury commodities.

As we all know, this popular picture reveals part, but certainly not all, of the economic story of Jordan since, say, 1974. But the fact remains that the "remittance bonanza" of earnings sent back by our nationals working in the Arab oil states, the fall-out from Lebanese displaced by their country's civil war and the overall buoyancy, stability and growth of the domestic economy have combined to produce more than a few anomalies -- offset as they are by inflationary pressures, an imbalance between the government's internal and external revenues and the increasingly pressing need to distribute wealth as well as government services more equitably among the country's various classes and regions.

Any steps taken by the government to rationalise these facts of our economic life can probably never be equally acceptable to every person in the kingdom. Clearly we have reached the point where the implementation of economic planning -- something usually handed down to the people by their government -- requires a preliminary stage of mass psychological preparation. That, at least, seems to be the reasoning behind the organisation of the current seminar in Amman on the "rationalisation of consumption."

Claims that Jordan has become a "consumer society" tend to dissipate if one ventures only a few kilometres beyond Jabal Amman. But concepts of patterns of consumption apply to onions and tomatoes as much as to Buicks and home videotape recorders. The present minister of supply, overwhelmed by the intricacies of keeping chickens and eggs on the market at acceptable prices, has been joking lately that he should in fact be called the "minister of demand."

Jordan's demographics -- the clustering of a vast majority of the population in a few urban centres -- and its dependence on imported goods which other countries, differently (not necessarily better) endowed by nature, manage to provide for themselves, tend to distort the equation of supply and demand here.

The high population growth rate, we are told, threatens to create even wider disparities, particularly in the question of food supply, in the not-too-distant future. The rationalisation of patterns of consumption will then become an urgent national priority rather than an important academic exercise.

In the meantime, however, it is just as well to air these problems now and try to devise a coherent strategy for confronting them. We will no doubt learn a lot about ourselves -- as producers, as consumers, as people, as a nation -- in the process; some of the lessons may be hard to transform into personal reality for each individual consumer, but that clearly is the national obligation looming before each and every one of us.

ARAB PRESS COMMENTARY

AL RA'I: President Carter and Sadat are working on a scenario in Washington which aims at covering up the failure of the autonomy negotiations and finding justifications for continuing them beyond May 26. It is clear that Mr. Begin also has a role in this scenario, which will be under discussion between him and President Carter next week.

Thus, it can be said that the Washington summit between the U.S. and Egypt is a tactical game, especially seeing that President Carter needs more than at any previous time, a political hoopla to enhance his status in the elections, to prevent the European countries from submitting their initiative and to enable the U.S. administration to continue its domination of the Palestinian issue in favour of Israeli interests.

In the light of all this, it is difficult to believe in the sincerity of this summit, and we warn against the media campaign which the U.S. may cook up around the Carter-Sadat talks, creating a false atmosphere to deceive the Arabs and the world.

AL DUSTOUR: A critical look at the course of events reveals that the Washington meeting -- at least from the timing point of view -- came to rescue the Camp David parties from the difficulties they face at domestic and international levels. President Carter, who received an election setback in New York, finds in the meeting an opportunity to gain more Jewish votes and to move the negotiations -- for which May 26 was declared the deadline -- away from the European initiative, which came as a painful and unexpected blow to Washington.

As for Mr. Begin, who suffers from domestic economic, political and partisan difficulties, he has found what he is looking for in the Washington meeting, and has prepared his "extremely difficult" demands to be put before President Carter who, in turn, will refer the bill to President Sadat.

As for the third partner who went to Washington, he has shown complete readiness to manifest more flexibility and submissiveness -- leaving behind him the seeds of a popular opposition which grows stronger every day in Egypt.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Cine Club Film

The Cine Club presents a film by James Fargo entitled "Caravan" starring Anthony Quinn and Jennifer O'Neill. The film starts at 8:00 p.m. at the Jordan Theatre, and will be followed by a discussion. Entry fee for guests is 250 fils.

Kasm plans Jordan visit

DAMASCUS, April 8 (R) -- Syrian Premier Abdurrahman Al Kasm will pay an official visit to Jordan for talks on promoting cooperation between the two neighbouring countries, official sources said here today.

The sources noted that an exact date for the visit had not yet been set, but said the trip was related to "coordination and existing cooperation" between Syria and Jordan.

It would be Dr. Kasm's first visit to Jordan since he became premier in January.

Dr. Rimawi, U.N. envoys tour projects

AMMAN, April 8 (JNA) -- Representatives of the Amman office of the U.N. Development Programme and the World Food Programme today accompanied Minister of Agriculture Qasem Al Rimawi on a tour of agricultural projects being carried out in Jordan with assistance from the U.N. agencies. Also accompanying the minister was the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Jordan, Sheikh Ibrahim Al Salamin.

One of their stops was at Al Faisal Nursery, where they were briefed on its experiments on plants and the production of olive and vine saplings for planting in rain-fed regions. The nursery, established in 1963, produced more than 330,000 olive saplings and 560,000 vine saplings in the past year, the visitors were told. Speaking during the tour, Dr.

P.M. makes tour of two Amman refugee camps

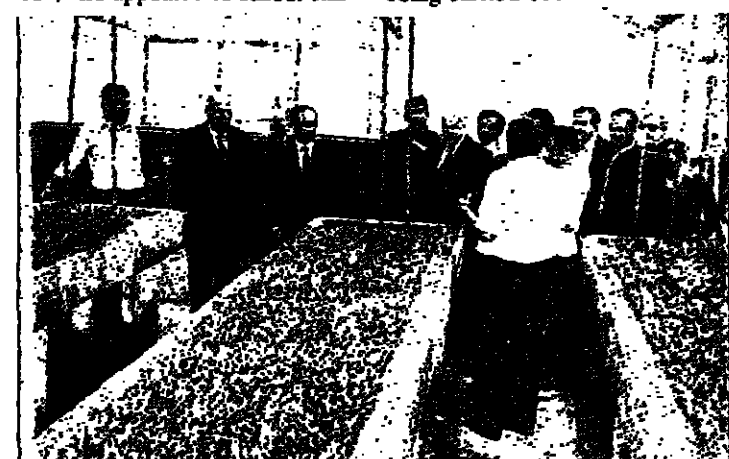
AMMAN, April 8 (JT) -- The government is concerned about the condition of the refugee camps in Jordan and the continuation of services offered them by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), the Prime Minister, Sharif Abdul Hamid Sharaf, said here Sunday.

Speaking during a tour of two refugee camps in Amman, the Prime Minister said the refugee problem was originally created by the international community, and that community ought to take full responsibility for the tragedy of the Palestinian victims, their rights and future.

The prime ministers, accompanied by the minister of labour, reconstruction and development, Mr. Omar Nabulsi, Minister of State Hassan Ibrahim, Amman Mayor Isam Ajlouni and a number of other officials toured the camps and inspected the conditions of refugees. They visited schools, inspected youth and social centres and met with teachers and representatives of the camps' inhabitants.

The prime minister discussed with the refugees a number of problems connected with the general conditions of the camps.

Rimawi said his ministry is keen on planting forests in most regions, and appealed to school children and citizens in general to help in afforestation programmes being carried out in Jordan.



Dr. Qasem Rimawi (second from left) inspects greenhouse facilities with the United Nations experts

Local News Briefs

AMMAN, April 8 (JNA) -- Minister of Supply Jawad Anani left for a three-day tour in the Far East Sunday to try to place orders for products needed by the proposed parallel market and the Civil Service Consumer Corporation. The two-week tour will take him to South Korea, Hong Kong and China, where he will meet with officials and discuss the purchase of various products. Among the main items to be purchased will be products needed by Jordanian children, such as toys, food and clothing, which will be sold for reasonable prices here, Dr. Anani said before departure. The minister is accompanied by a three-member delegation.

AMMAN, April 8 (JNA) -- The director of the Iraqi Housing Corporation, Mr. Abdul Mutaleb Al 'Ureibi, said here Sunday that he will discuss with Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Jamal Sha'er the establishment of an Arab fund for financing housing projects, as recommended by the Arab ministers of housing and reconstruction. Speaking upon arriving here for a visit to Jordan to last several days, Mr. 'Ureibi said that during his visit he will supervise the final arrangements for the construction of the second housing project for Jordanian journalists, which will be fully financed by the Iraqi government. Mr. 'Ureibi is accompanied by a number of officials. Mr. 'Ureibi today visited the Housing Corporation and met with its director, M. Hamdallah Nabulsi, who briefed him on the corporation's schemes. He was later taken to a number of sites where projects are being carried out.

AMMAN, April 8 (JNA) -- The Minister of Information, Dr. Sa'id Tal, has received an invitation from his Algerian counterpart, Mr. Abdul Hamid

Mahri, to pay a visit to Algeria for talks aimed at strengthening cooperation between the two countries in information. The invitation was delivered to Dr. Tal by the Libyan Ambassador in Amman, Mr. Ahmad Al 'Aidi. A date for the visit will be fixed later, a ministry source said.

AMMAN, April 8 (JT) -- A 1980 budget was fixed for the fund set up to support the steadfastness of the people of the occupied Arab territories during a meeting here yesterday of the ad hoc Jordanian-Palestinian joint committee. The meeting was co-chaired by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hassan Ibrahim and Mr. Hamid Abu Sitta, a member of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The meeting was continuing today.

AMMAN, April 8 (JNA) -- Any Jordanian citizen residing in the country is now allowed to keep a deposit up to JD 10,000 in foreign currency in Jordanian banks and other financial institutions, according to an announcement issued by the Central Bank. Jordanians living abroad will, however, still be allowed to deposit any amount of money in foreign currency in Jordanian banks and withdraw any amounts without any restrictions.

AMMAN, April 8 (JNA) -- Train service between Amman and Damascus will be discontinued as from the first of next month, a spokesman for the Hijaz Railway announced here today. He said that the stoppage is for purely economic reasons and to avoid further heavy losses because of bad business. The losses are due to the fact that people prefer to travel between Syria and Jordan by car, he said. Trains running between Beirut and Damascus stopped soon after the outbreak of disturbances in Lebanon, he added.

CORRECTION

An article in the March 30, 1980 Jordan-Japan Supplement, entitled "Japanese Companies in Jordan" contained an error. The correct name of the company referred to there as Tokai Kojo is Tokai Kogyo Co., Ltd.

GOOD NEWS to the people of Aqaba

The opening of the Vienna Flower Shop. Flowers, plants, flower arrangements. Decoration of wedding cars and all types of decorative flowers.

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Lest we forget: Deir Yassin

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article commemorates the 32nd anniversary today of the massacre at the Palestinian village of Deir Yassin.

By Dr. Abdel-Qader Yassine

ON APRIL 10, 1948 members of the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern group, Zionist terror organisations which had been harassing the British in Palestine, hosted a tea party for American press correspondents near the former village of Deir Yassin.

They were in an excited mood, exhilarated by the success of the previous day's work, and now beginning the second stage of the operation -- publicity. The facts were presented in detail while the press scribbled furiously the words that were to electrify the world the following day.

In this most "civilised" manner, while passing cakes, the Zionist organisations who had operated with the support of the Jewish Haganah militia told how they had butchered more than two hundred Palestinian villagers -- half of them women and children.

A spokesman related how one hundred men in four groups attacked the sleeping village at 4:30 in the morning on April 9, using automatic weapons and rifles. Women and children were advised to take shelter in caves, but obviously the terrifying sight of the attackers and their immediate activity, precluded this. New York Times correspondent Dana A. Schmidt wrote:

"The spokesman asserted... that casualties among the women and children at Deir Yassin were inevitable because almost every house had to be reduced by force. Ten houses were blown up. At others the attackers blew open the doors and threw in hand grenades."

"Within two hours," the spokesman said, "the village was under control."

Eyewitnesses, among them Jacques de Reynier of the International Red Cross, found "a scene of ghastly horror" at Deir Yassin. They reported the sight of murdered pregnant women, tiny babies, old and young alike strewn about like so many torn and cast-off dolls. One hundred and fifty people had been crammed down a cistern. Most frightful of all was that there were a few survivors who returned to view this savage scene.

The diabolical plan

This then, announced to the world by the murderers themselves at an informal party, was the beginning of the terror for the Palestinian people. The utter bestiality of the attack made on the peaceful village, whose inhabitants had only recently spoken for non-violence in the treatment of the Zionists by their own people, and the follow-up in propaganda, began the plan to start the stampede of the Palestinians from the land which was to be the state of Israel -- as proclaimed three days later by the General Zionist Council. Professor Arnold Toynbee in a *Study of History* states:

"The evil deeds committed by the Zionist Jews against the Palestinian Arabs that were comparable to crimes committed against the Jews by the Nazis, were the massacre of men, women and children at Deir Yassin on April 9, 1948, which precipitated a flight of the Arab population in large numbers from districts within range of the Jewish armed forces and the subsequent deliberate expulsion of the Arab population from districts conquered by the Jewish forces between the May 15, 1948 and the end of the year."

Although there were indeed many more instances of massacres and Zionist bloodbaths in store for the Palestinian population, Deir Yassin was the first and the one which would become a symbol for the Palestinians of all the crimes committed against them in the name of Zionism; of all the brutal persecutions, tortures and deaths experienced by those innocent of anything but the desire to live peacefully in the tolerant state their ancestors had inhabited for centuries. They would remember Deir Yassin as a political mass murder that dragged them into the creation of Israel by their entrails.

The U.S. press correspondents will probably always remember the hands that poured their tea that night near Deir Yassin.

Menachem Begin: the butcher of Deir Yassin
"MENACHEM" means "comforter" in Hebrew, minister.

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Mother says in Amman press conference

Ziad Abu 'Ein's father, brother were tortured in Israeli jails

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN, April 8—Ziad Abu 'Ein's father can barely walk today because he was tortured by his Israeli interrogators, according to his mother, Mrs. Mariam Abu 'Ein.

She was speaking before a press conference here yesterday to defend her son Ziad, who faces possible extradition from the U.S. to Israel for his alleged part in planting an explosive device on May 14, 1979 in Tiberias. When the device was detonated, 2 people were killed and 36 were injured. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) claimed responsibility for the explosion.

"The Israeli authorities held Ziad's father and brother in prison for a month," Mrs. Abu 'Ein said. They were tortured during their interrogation before they were released upon Ziad's arrest in Chicago (in August 1979). My husband is still suffering as a result of the torture: he now can barely walk. Ziad's brother is now all right—thanks be to God."

Mrs. Abu 'Ein denounced the "accusations" against her son, now 20, saying he could not possibly have been in Tiberias on May 14. On that day, she said, he was in Gaza on business and her son, Mahmoud, was at a shop at the side of his wife who was giving birth. In their absence, "I was left to tend the family's minium shop and outlet store in Tiberias. All the employees at the shop can testify to these facts," she added.

Mr. Abdul Jawad Saleh—a member of the Executive Com-

mittee of the PLO and head of its defence committee for Palestinian detainees, who also participated in the press conference—added that 14 individuals testified that they had seen Ziad in Ramallah on that day. He said that his own son had been detained and questioned by the Israeli authorities in connection with the case.

The testimony of these witnesses was not admitted into evidence in the U.S. magistrate's court which heard the extradition case. On Dec. 18, Judge Olga Jurco issued her ruling that "probable cause" existed for the U.S. to suspect Mr. Abu 'Ein and that the offence was not of a political character. Political crimes are not extraditable under international law and under the U.S.-Israeli extradition treaty.

It was revealed at the press conference that immediately following the ruling, the Jordanian embassy in Washington, D.C. sent a letter of protest to the U.S. State Department. It requested that the U.S. turn Ziad Abu 'Ein, a Jordanian citizen, over to the Jordanian authorities.

The defence appealed the ruling of extradition to the U.S. District Court of Chicago. Two judges disqualified themselves from the case. Judge Julius Hoffman withdrew because of his reported Zionist leanings and his record in the notorious trial of the Chicago Seven anti-war activists. Judge Samuel Perry excused himself from the case, claiming poor health. Judge Frank Meagar finally heard the appeal.

On March 29, Judge Meagar issued his ruling upholding the lower court's decision for the extradition of Mr. Abu 'Ein. The

Jordan Times learned today that last week the Jordanian Embassy registered another protest with the State Department following the outcome of the appeal.

During her speech yesterday Ziad Abu 'Ein's mother said: "I came especially from Ramallah for this press conference in order to appeal to all Arab governments to intervene on the behalf of my son—to save him from this oppression and to save him from torture and perhaps even death at the hands of the Israelis."

In response to a question she said she had not been interrogated by the Israeli authorities when crossing the King Hussein Bridge into Jordan last week. When asked whether she had plans to go to the U.S., she answered: "I have no comment at this time."

In June 1979, less than a week before Ziad left for Chicago to visit his sister Khawla, he married Miss Hiam Shihadeh of Amman. Dressed in her green and white checked schoolgirl's uniform, she also made a statement at the conference.

"Ziad is now in the tenth day of his hunger strike. (He has not eaten since March 29 in protest at the outcome of his appeal.) I spoke with his sister in Chicago over the telephone Sunday and she said he had lost ten kilos. Nonetheless, his spirits remain high and he insists on continuing his hunger strike until he is freed by the American authorities or dies. Ziad would rather face death this way than torture at the hands of Israeli interrogators."

She announced that the defence lawyer for her husband will file an appeal requesting Judge Meagar to reconsider his decision in a few days. She added that they did not have much hope in this last appeal.

"I appeal to all Arab kings, heads of state and governments to stand by my husband and to help the Jordanian government in its efforts to stop the extradition," she said. "I appeal to (U.N. Secretary General) Kurt Waldheim, the heads of international organisations, the International Human Rights Commission and Amnesty International to intervene on behalf of my husband and save him from certain death at Israeli hands."

"I also appeal and request President Carter and (U.S. Secretary of State) Cyrus Vance to live up to their policy on human rights and intervene in the case. I ask them to try once to show the human side of America after its government has committed so many crimes over the years under different slogans. It is time they stopped ignoring the Arab nations and human rights in this region."

She added that she had sent telegrams to U.S. officials and international organisations and asked that "all people do what they can to free my husband."

Mr. Saleh described Ziad Abu 'Ein's case as "representing the height of the U.S. attitude of hatred towards the Palestinians...From the very beginning it has been clear that the U.S. has been trying to implicate Ziad and hand him over to the Israeli authorities. The State Department has put pressure on the federal courts in Chicago and has influenced their decision to hand him over to Israel."

"The U.S. intention to extradite him to Israel also became clear when the judge refused to admit documents from the defence that would show the (Israeli) government's evidence was false."

Mr. Saleh added that Israel was asking for Mr. Abu 'Ein's extradition on the basis of a confession extracted by a friend, Mr. Jamal Yassin, age 24. He claimed that Mr. Yassin had implicated his friend in the Tiberias incident in order "to save his own skin. He did not want to face Israeli interrogation and torture any longer so he blamed Ziad, whom he thought safe because he was in the U.S."

"When Jamal knew what his false accusation had done to Ziad, he testified before two Israeli lawyers that his first testimony was false and had been taken under torture. The U.S. judge relied on Jamal's original testimony in making his decision but did not admit into evidence his second one. She also refused to scrutinise the 200 pages presented by Ziad's lawyer outlining facts and points that do not allow the U.S. to extradite to Israel legally."

"We believe therefore, that the U.S. government's decision to extradite Ziad is a political one, not a judicial one, and that it has pressured the courts to obtain this outcome."

The decision to extradite Ziad Abu 'Ein was called a "gross violation of international law" by Mr. Salim Zu'bi who spoke at the conference as head of the Human Rights Committee of the Jordanian Bar Association. "We condemn this decision and the hatred it shows the U.S. has for the Arab people."

Legally speaking, he said, even if Mr. Yassin's alleged confession were true, it does not constitute sufficient evidence for an extradition. He added that even if the U.S. courts could produce full evidence that Mr. Abu 'Ein was guilty—and he is not guilty—the crime would be of a political nature and under "any law in the world" an individual cannot be

extradited for a political crime.

Another crucial legal point in the case is that in May, 1979 the U.S. District Court in San Francisco reiterated the exception to extradition in the case of political offences. It ruled against the government by refusing to extradite a member of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). Unlike Mr. Abu 'Ein, the IRA member—who had been wanted by the British government for a bombing case in 1974—made a confession in the U.S. to the crime with which he was charged.

There remains the small possibility that Judge Meagar will revoke the decision he made not to extradite Ziad. The defence lawyer began preparing an appeal after the motion was approved by the judge last week when the prosecuting attorney gave his consent to this unusual step.

If the appeal is not successful, Ziad's case may well go on to the Illinois State Supreme Court and from there to the U.S. Supreme Court. Before the case gets to this point, however, the secretary of state may refuse to honour the extradition order, which is his prerogative.

In the case of such a refusal, it is possible that Ziad Abu 'Ein would be turned over to the Jordanian authorities as the Jordanian embassy has requested. Another possible outcome of the case was suggested to the Jordan Times today by Mr. Zu'bi. In his opinion, Ziad Abu 'Ein could legally be tried for the Tiberias incident in the U.S., a step which he feels would at least save him from the certainty of torture at the hands of the Israeli occupation authorities.

TODAY'S WEATHER

There will be a slight drop in temperature, with the appearance of some low clouds. Winds will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, northerly moderate winds and calm seas.

	Overnight	Daytime
Amman	low 10	high 22
Aqaba	10	33
Deserts	11	27
Jordan Valley	23	28

AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE REPORT

Name of Company	Par Value	Number Traded	High	Low	Closing Price
Arab Union Insurance Co.	JD 1,000	1500	1,600	1,600	1,600
Jordan Lime and Silicate Brick Industries Co.	JD 5,000	1320	5,600	5,500	5,500
Jordan Dairy Co.	JD 1,000	2390	1,420	1,420	1,420
Arabian Development and Investment	JD 2,000	370	1,400	1,400	1,400
Jordan Gulf Bank	JD 1,000	4941	1,530	1,520	1,520
Housing Bank	JD 1,000	108	1,890	1,890	1,890
Jordan-Kuwait Bank	JD 1,000	2111	2,250	2,250	2,250
Arab Investment Bank	JD 1,000	2100	1,530	1,500	1,530
Jordan National Bank	JD 5,000	50	14,050	14,050	14,050
Arabian Co. for Paper Manufacture and Trade	JD 1,000	4050	1,010	1,000	1,000
Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural Co.	JD 1,000	3745	3,300	3,300	3,300
Arab International Hotels Co.	JD 1,000	300	1,020	1,010	1,010
Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Co.	JD 5,000	80	27,500	27,500	27,500
Arab Company for Aluminium Industries	JD 1,000	50	1,440	1,440	1,440
Jordan Electricity Co.	JD 1,000	3160	2,080	2,080	2,080
International Construction and Investment	JD 1,000	4940	1,010	1,000	1,000
Mas for Blades Manufacture	JD 1,000	1059	1,000	1,000	1,000
Jordan Ceramic Industries Co.	JD 1,000	720	1,250	1,250	1,250
Jordan Paper and Cardboard Factories Co.	JD 1,000	80	1,260	1,260	1,260
Jordan Phosphate Mines Co.	JD 1,000	350	3,750	3,700	3,750
Arab Chemical Detergents Industries Co.	JD 1,000	200	2,600	2,600	2,600
Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co.	JD 5,000	2696	9,900	9,800	9,900

Total Volume Traded on Tuesday, April 8, 1980: JD 88,951
Total number of shares traded: 36,320

Government Development Bonds

Year of Maturity	Par Value	Number Traded	Volume Traded	High	Low
1982	JD 5,000	5	25	5,010	5,010
1989	JD 10,000	450	4,500	10,000	10,000

Total Volume Traded Tuesday, April 8, 1980: JD 4,525
Total number of bonds traded: 455

Consumption seminar opens

P.M.: Productivity the key to self-sufficiency

AMMAN, April 8 (JNA) — The Prime Minister, Sharif Abdul Hamid Sharaf today said Jordanians had to produce more and consume less.

In a speech at the opening of a three-day seminar on the rationalisation of consumption at the Faculty of Economics and Commerce of the University of Jordan, he said Jordan had to become more self-sufficient economically and a more equitable society.

The prime minister said that the control of consumption is only one aspect of the rationalisation of consumption. The other and perhaps more important factor is stepping up production. Jordanians should eat and wear what they produce, he said. He explained that this does not, however, mean that Jordan should live in isolation from the rest of the world, oblivious to the interdependency of resources.

The prime minister called for the redistribution of national wealth in a just and reasonable manner, based on a correct and legal basis and by fair means.

This should take place through fair tax laws and sound economic, fiscal, administrative, political and social legislation to reduce disparities and to advance towards a society where social justice prevails, he added.

He said that there were several factors involved in the nationalisation of consumption, among them government expenditure, taxation policy, customs tariffs, modes of consumption, government supply policy, government subsidies and others.

All sectors, the prime minister added, are called upon to assist in applying the appropriate measures.

During the seminar 24 papers are to be discussed on economic and fiscal policy, "parallel markets," food security, the role of scientific research in agricultural production and the role of both public and private sectors in the rationalisation of consumption, in addition to problems of rationalising energy consumption.

A paper read on behalf of the Minister of Supply, Dr. Jawad Anani, emphasised that Jordan should concentrate on boosting domestic production and reducing imports. Interest rates should be increased and allowed to reach their natural levels, and government subsidies on consumer

items should be cut. Dr. Anani also called for revising the tax structure, promoting development projects outside the capital and increasing agricultural production.

Dr. Anani is on a trip to South-east Asia, partly to secure supplies for "parallel markets," one of the government's new tools for fighting inflation.

In the paper read on his behalf, Dr. Anani said income determines the level and volume of expenditure, while prices determine the quantitative distribution of goods and services. However, he added, these indicators alone may not be sufficient to explain the volume of consumer expenditure.

The minister of supply said among factors affecting the volume and distribution of consumption are the trend towards conspicuous consumption, expectations of price increases, redistribution of income, scanty investment opportunities and the level of development of the banking system.

Dr. Anani said the rationalisation of consumption is necessary to increase savings and boost production.

He added that a major reason to rationalise consumption is so that Jordan can decrease its reliance on external aid.

Dr. Adeb Haddad, economic adviser to the Central Bank, then presented a research paper in which he said that available figures show considerable increases in the gross domestic product (GDP) and the gross national product (GNP) during the period 1975-1979. GNP grew -- at market prices -- from JD 420 million in 1975 to JD 790 million in 1979. GDP increased to JD 635 million in 1979 from JD 280 million in 1975.

Dr. Haddad added that consumer price index increases did not exceed 2 per cent before 1967; but after that the rate of increase started to grow until it reached 14 per cent during 1975-1979. The national money supply went up from JD 219 million in 1975 to JD 466 million in 1979, at an annual rate of increase of 29 per cent, he said.

He added that the flow of foreign aid and remittances from Jordanians abroad played a major role in determining the balance of

payments. Foreign aid in 1975 totalled JD 85 million while it increased to JD 300 in 1979, he said.

Remittances from Jordanians abroad went up to JD 180 million in 1979, compared to JD 47 million in 1975.

The Director General of the Pension Fund, Mr. Wasef Azer, said a Jordanian household which used to buy certain goods and services for JD 100 in 1975 needed JD 156 to buy the same goods and services in 1979. Mr. Azer added that if the income of such a household did not increase by 56 per cent during the same period, this meant that the household's standard of living had deteriorated.

He said inflation affects not only individuals, but economic activity as a whole. He listed a number of alternative measures that the government could take to combat inflation.

Dr. Mohammad Bani Hani of the National Planning Council presented the first paper in the afternoon session, on the need for a more just distribution of income in Jordan and the impact of income distribution on savings, economic growth and development.

He was followed by Dr. Haytham Hourani of the University of Jordan, who presented an analysis of imports and rationalisation of consumption. He said consumption amounts to 89.3 per cent of GNP. Imports amounted to 84.5 per cent of GNP in 1978. Dr. Hourani said imports are growing at an annual rate of 21 per cent, while GNP is growing at the rate of 8.5 per cent.

A breakdown of imported goods shows the dominance of consumer goods, which account for 60 per cent of total imports. Consumer goods imports are increasing by 33 per cent annually, thus leaving a chronic trade deficit, Dr. Hourani said.

He called for controlling imports of consumer goods and finding a comprehensive national policy for consumption.

Dr. Abdullah Hamarneh of the University of Jordan presented a detailed study on the food crisis in Jordan and its causes, which he attributed to international factors, rises in oil prices and imports, in addition to insufficiency of domestic food production.

Dr. Ahmad Qasem Al Ahmad of the Economics Department of the Royal Scientific Society, presented a study on demand on consumer goods. He said successive development plans have increased the national income and consequently the income of individuals, which has led to greater purchasing power and demand on essentials, particularly consumer goods.

Dr. Ahmad emphasised that economic planning needs to take into account family income and the expected prices of consumer goods. Such planning should aim at securing a distribution of income that would remove the strain on the family budget. This should be combined with a drive to eliminate shortages and assure individuals that consumer goods are available at all times at prices that are within reach.

The President of the University of Jordan, Dr. Nasereddin Al Assad, spoke earlier on scientific and practical approaches to the rationalisation of consumption.

The opening session was attended by a number of cabinet members, top government officials and representatives of the private sector in addition to deans and staff members of the University of Jordan.



THE General Manager of Bisharat Tours Corporation, Mr. Fayek Bisharat returned here after attending the eighth international conference of ASTA held in the city of Recife, Brazil from March 23 to 27, 1980.

Mr. Bisharat participated in the fair held on the occasion of the conference, and showed a touristic film about Jordan in addition to distributing booklets on tourism in Jordan and souvenirs representing Jordanian touristic products. Mr. Bisharat was also interviewed on Brazilian television.

At the farewell party given by the Brazilian airline VARIG for the participants in honour of the governor of Pernambuco District, Mr. Marco Michel, Mr. Fayek Bisharat presented a souvenir to Mr. Michel—a sea-shell replica of the Dome of the Rock.

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Economic News Briefs

Japan seeks Arab deposits of \$3-5 billion

TOKYO, April 8 (R) -- Japan's Vice Minister of Finance for International Affairs, Tekehiro Sagami, plans to visit the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, finance ministry officials here said yesterday. They said Mr. Sagami's itinerary had not been fixed, but the visit was likely to take place either before or after he travelled to Hamburg for a International Monetary Fund interim committee meeting on April 23.

The officials refused further details, but the mass-circulation daily Mainichi Shinbun said Japan was expected to ask the central banks of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to deposit a total of between \$3 to \$5 billion with the Bank of Tokyo, guaranteed by the Japanese government.

The newspaper said this was part of a measure to encourage an inflow of capital into Japan to help support the sagging yen against the U.S. dollar.

Meanwhile, informed sources last week said Japanese Foreign Minister Saburo Okita was expected to visit the Middle East, which supplies 80 per cent of Japan's oil, some time after the summit of leading industrial democracies in Venice in June.

Algeria demands higher prices for its gas

NEW YORK, April 8 (AP) -- Algeria has suspended shipments of liquefied natural gas to its largest U.S. customer amid a dispute over prices, while Kuwait has cut its sales of crude oil to Gulf Oil Corp. by 85 per cent. The actions were unrelated, but each reflected growing militancy by some Organization of Petroleum Exporting countries members who have been telling western customers to accept their terms or go home with empty tankers.

The cutoff of Algerian gas shipments to El Paso Co. of Houston, Texas, came after the company's agreement to buy 700 million cubic feet of gas a day for \$1.95 per thousand cubic feet expired last week.

Algeria, supplier of about 1.5 per cent of U.S. natural gas needs, has been demanding \$6.11 per thousand cubic feet from European buyers after watching the world price of crude oil double to around \$30 a barrel in the past year. The Algerians have failed to reach agreement on a new price with El Paso, and the current situation is "no price, no gas," Vice President David Mackle said in an interview yesterday.

El Paso sells the liquefied natural gas to three Eastern U.S. gas distribution companies. The companies have said they don't expect the cutoff to have a major impact on operations.

W. Germany narrows payments deficit

FRANKFURT, April 8 (AP) -- West Germany posted a balance of payments deficit of DM 3.388 billion (\$1.72 billion) and a current account deficit of DM 2.123 billion (\$1.08 billion) in February, the Central Bank said today. Both represented a narrowing of the deficit from January's figures, the bank said.

In January the balance of payments deficit stood at DM 3.84 billion (\$1.97 billion) at current exchange rates. The current account deficit during the first month of 1980 stood at DM 2.413 billion (\$1.2 billion).

The current account deficit has been cited as one of the reasons for the recent decline in the value of the West German mark against the U.S. dollar. West Germany has turned to Saudi Arabia and other foreign sources for loans to offset the deficit.

U.S.-Iran dispute weakens yen

LONDON, April 8 (R) -- The U.S. dollar held its strength on international markets today despite the deepening dispute between the United States and Iran over the U.S. hostages in Tehran. However, the currencies of some nations depending heavily on Iran for oil, particularly Japan, did suffer today.

Investors feared there might be a disruption of Iranian oil supplies because of a worsening row between Iran and Iraq as well as Iran's threat to cut off oil from any country which joined the U.S. in imposing sanctions, currency dealers said.

Uncertainty and concern caused by developments in Iran have also forced up the price of gold since the weekend. It shot up by about \$30 to \$525 an ounce in New York last night, but traded at steadier prices today. The afternoon price fix in London today put gold's value at \$528 an ounce.

Meanwhile in Tokyo, President Carter's decision to break off diplomatic relations with Iran gave the U.S. dollar a further boost against the declining Japanese yen.

Dealers said many banks in Tokyo believed that the break in relations between the United States and Iran would act to weaken the yen more than the dollar.

Turkey expects over \$1b in OECD, Saudi aid

ANKARA, April 8 (R) -- Turkey's chief economic planner, Mr. Turgut Ozal, said yesterday Turkey expected between \$1 billion and \$1.2 billion of cash aid this year from western industrialised countries, plus cash assistance from Saudi Arabia.

He told a press luncheon he was sure the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) would pledge the expected amount when it meets in Paris on April 15.

The OECD postponed a decision on the size of its aid package to Turkey at a "pledging conference" in Paris last month. Officials said at the time the postponement did not mean a lessening of their commitment to Turkey.

Mr. Ozal, head of Turkey's state planning organisation and Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's chief economic adviser said Saudi Arabia had promised large-scale cash aid to Turkey after the OECD figure was known. The amount of aid from Saudi Arabia

had still to be worked out, he said.

Mr. Ozal said he did not think the Saudi deal would be tied to conditions. "The Saudis have nothing we want, except oil. If they tie their aid to that, it's fine by us," he told the luncheon.

Mr. Ozal said Turkey needed a total of four billion dollars aid this year alone to keep the economy afloat, made up of foreign cash aid and debt rescheduling.

Of the remaining three billion dollars or so, between \$1 billion and \$1.2 billion would come from the OECD, \$250 million from a new World Bank credit and the rest from postponed debts, increased use of acceptance credits and increased cash coverage by private banks.

Mr. Ozal said Turkey hoped to sign shortly a new stand-by agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), probably for a period of two or three years. Under the current agreement, which expires in June, Turkey received 250 million special drawing rights (about \$320 million).

W. Germany, Japan big buyers of Iranian crude

LONDON, April 8 (R) -- Japan and West Germany are among major buyers of oil from Iran, which today threatened to cut supplies to any country joining the U.S. trade embargo against it. Japan had been buying some 500,000 barrels a day in February from Iran, about 12 per cent of its total requirement. During the first two months of 1980, West Germany obtained 2.69 million tonnes of Iranian oil.

Major western oil companies buying from Iran are British Petroleum and the Anglo-Dutch Shell group.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON, APRIL 8 (R) -- Following are the buying and rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar close of trading on the London foreign exchange and bullion market today:

One sterling	2.1645/60	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1849/52	Canadian dollar
	1.9445/55	West German mark
	2.1240/65	Dutch guilder
	1.8440/60	Swiss franc
	31.22/27	Belgian franc
	4.4825/4900	French franc
	902.00/903.00	Italian lire
	258.75/259.00	Japanese yen
	4.5180/90	Swedish krona
	5.2000/2020	Norwegian crown
One ounce of gold	537.00/541.00	Danish crown
		U.S. dollars

London Stock Market

LONDON, April 8 (R) -- The market closed quietly mixed, with the FT index down 6.4 at 425.2. Oils ended as much as 12p lower following the temporary shutdown of production in the North Sea. The oilfield reflecting anxieties over international tensions.

Industrials and banks eased after small profit taking but, government bonds ended up to 1/4 point higher.

Gold shares closed with gains stretching to five dollar sympathy with the bullion price.

U.S. and Canadian stocks finished lower. Tricentrol and Shell lost 12p apiece, while Ultramarine fell 10p and 6p respectively. Banks had Barclays and Mid shedding 8p with Natwest 5p lower.

Hawker and ICI both dipped 6p while losses of 4p or 5p posted against Glaxo, Unilever, Thorne, GEC and Tube Investments.

Anthony Gibbs closed a penny lower after news of the offer from Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank which ended 3p down.

AMMAN MARKET PLACE

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Thousands of Cubans seeking asylum Peru seeks aid in solving Havana embassy trouble

LIMA, Peru, April 8 (Agencies) -- The Peruvian government turned to its Latin-American allies in the Andean Pact for help in finding asylum for the estimated 10,000 Cubans jamming its embassy in Havana.

The United States said it would take some of them if the Peruvian government would let the refugees come to Lima. But so far the Peruvians were admitting none because they had no definite assurances that other countries would take them.

"Peru cannot take charge of 10,000 refugees, no country can do that individually," Foreign Minister Arturo Garcia said.

Mr. Garcia, and the foreign ministers of the other four Andean Pact nations -- Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela -- scheduled an emergency meeting in the Peruvian capital tomorrow to review the situation and discuss what might be done.

Havana Radio described the throng that descended on the Peruvian embassy last weekend as "vagrants and bums" and said they were welcome to leave the country.

"If the government of Peru wishes to receive in their country all the anti-socials and bums, we will be glad to authorize them to leave our country and also those who are ideologically in disagreement with the revolution and socialism," said the broadcast.

The U.S. State Department said it would consider applications for admission to the United States from those Cubans who could reach the Peruvian capital.

Peru's foreign minister said the five members of the embassy staff were not able to cope with the crowd jamming the suburban estate and asked the International Red Cross to provide food.

The crowd poured into the eight hectare embassy compound after the Cuban police guard was withdrawn because a policeman was killed when six Cubans seeking asylum crashed a bus into the

compound gate. Eighteen other Cubans had been inside the embassy since Jan. 1 trying to leave the country, and 16 Cubans have been at the Venezuelan embassy for months.

Cuban President Fidel Castro's government restored the police guard yesterday, sealing off the surrounding six blocks. Radio Havana said the government would provide medicine and sanitation facilities and was trying to reduce the size of the crowd.

The Cuban youth newspaper Juventud Rebelde said the government had told 2,470 people they could return to their homes and apply for exit visas. Havana Radio said 1,730 had been given passes to go home and return to the embassy later.

Most of the refugees have rejected the offer because they are afraid the police would prevent them from returning to the embassy. They have endured appalling conditions, with little food, virtually no sanitation and the risk of disease.

The procedure for obtaining a safe-conduct pass is simple, the most difficult part for most is to push their way through the multitude to one of the unlocked gates. Once outside, the Cuban hands over his or her identity card and is given a pass.

Peruvian officials insisted there were 10,000 people in the compound. One foreign diplomat in Havana put the number at 7,000 and the Cuban government newspaper Granma said there were 3,000.

In its front-page editorial yesterday, Granma blamed Peru for the situation, which it said was the "bitter fruits of a policy of protecting common delinquents."

This was a clear reference to

Peru's decision to grant political asylum to Cubans who had earlier crashed vehicles through the police guard around the embassy.

In Miami, thousands of Cuban-Americans marched in support of their compatriots. Leaders called for a revolution to overthrow President Castro and led chants of "war, war."

A local Spanish radio station organized a drive to collect food to send to the would-be emigrants. Exile leaders said more than \$80,000 along with enough food and medicine to fill at least six planes had been collected.

Miami City Commissioner and exile leader Armando Lacasa said the numbers crowding into the Peruvian embassy was proof that conditions in Cuba were still bad after 21 years of government by President Castro, adding "Castro will soon be out."

Florida Senator Richard Stone said he had arranged for Cuban exile leaders to meet State Department officials in Washington.

President Castro has told the Cubans they can leave as soon as another country grants them entry visas.

El Salvador junta orders strict enforcement of gun control laws

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador, April 8 (AP) -- The civilian-military junta has ordered strict enforcement of existing gun control laws to take weapons out of the hands of unauthorized civilians, a government source said. The sources, who asked not to be identified, said convicted offenders will be jailed for up to one year.

Leftists, who want to establish a Marxist government here and who are fighting the junta, and rightists, fighting both the left and the government, are armed to the teeth.

The right is clandestine and authorities usually only see their bullets, but leftists frequently sport automatic rifles and myriads of pistols during their protest marches.

"We hope to be able to control the number of guns being carried by persons who have not registered them," said the source.

There was no estimate of how many persons carry illegal weapons, but in political violence since Jan. 1, an estimated 1,000 persons have been killed.

In an unrelated matter, Mrs. Daphne Dunn, the cancer-stricken wife of kidnapped South African Ambassador Archibald Gardner Dunn, wrote a letter, published in a newspaper here, asking the captors, the Popular Liberation Forces, to establish contact with the family. Mrs. Dunn, being treated in Los Angeles for terminal cancer, implored the guerrillas to free her husband, abducted Nov. 29.

The guerrillas first demanded publication of a political manifesto in 65 languages and 102 countries, but have since shifted their demands to a \$20 million ransom to help support their drive to topple the government.

WHO raps cigarette habit

UNITED NATIONS, April 8 (R) -- A weekend marijuana smoker risks his health less than someone who smokes 25 cigarettes a day, says a World Health Organisation (WHO) expert.

Dr. Daniel Horn, a member of the U.N. agency's expert committee on smoking control, also says cigarette smoking aggravates every existing health problem as well as harming the healthy person.

He spoke at a news conference yesterday to mark World Health Day, the theme for which this year is "Smoking or health: the choice is yours."

Asked about marijuana smoking, Dr. Horn said this was not part of the problem WHO was

Chad factions doubt long-term peace as ceasefire takes effect

N'DJAMENA, April 8 (R) -- A truce in Chad's civil war takes effect at 1100 GMT today, but both warring factions express serious doubts that it will bring lasting peace.

The ceasefire was signed on Sunday by President Goukouni Oueddei and his rival, Defence Minister Hissene Habre, after Togolese President Gnassingbe Eyadema mediated between them for two days.

But President Goukouni has told reporters, "I am very pessimistic about the outcome. I do not believe it will come to anything because I know the other side."

Mr. Habre said from the area of N'Djamena under his control that he would respect the ceasefire if the president's side did too. "But I know the other side, and I don't think they will honour the truce," he added.

At least 800 people have been killed and some 2,000 wounded in a 16-day battle for power in N'Djamena. More than 70,000 people have fled the capital to the safety of neighbouring Cameroon, and so far have shown no signs of returning to Chad.

The ceasefire, the fifth negotiated since the cur-

rent fighting began, will be supervised by two senior officers from each of four countries, Cameroon, Nigeria, Liberia and Togo. They will be joined by an Organisation of African Unity (OAU) peacekeeping force. But Togolese President Eyadema, who returned home yesterday, said he did not know when the OAU forces would arrive.

Chad has suffered sporadic civil war since gaining independence from France in 1960.

In this latest battle for power, little progress has been made by either side, according to military sources. "They win ten metres here, lose ten metres there -- and that's about it for the day," as one of them put it.

Meanwhile, the secretary-general of the OAU, Mr. Edem Kodjo, left the Liberian capital today for N'Djamena to try to bring peace to the country. A spokesman at the Liberian Foreign Affairs Ministry said. The spokesman said Mr. Kodjo would confer with President Goukouni and other warring factions.

Mr. Kodjo has been in Monrovia for five days conferring with President William Tolbert, current chairman of the OAU.

Greece to hold talks with U.S. envoys

ATHENS, April 8 (R) -- A four-man United States Senate delegation opens talks with Greek Government leaders here tomorrow on U.S. - Greek relations.

Along with Senator Baker (Republican, Tennessee), are Senators Joseph Biden (Democrat, Delaware) Senator Edward Zorinsky (Democrat, Nebraska), and Senator Thad Cochran (Republican - Mississippi).

The senators will meet tomorrow with Premier Constantine Karamanlis, Defence Minister Evangelos Averoff and Minister of Coordination Constantine Mitsotakis.

On Thursday, they will meet Mr. Andreas Papandreu, the leader of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement main opposition party, and Foreign Minister George Rallis.

The main topic of the talks will be Greece's bid to return to the military wing of NATO. It withdrew in the summer of 1974 in the wake of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus.

Greece has already rejected several plans submitted by NATO's supreme commander in Europe, claiming it gave Turkey increased control over Aegean air space and the Aegean Sea.

The Greek leaders are expected

to stress to the American senators that Greece's re-entry should be based on a 1978 agreement by former NATO commander General Alexander Haig and the then commander of Greek armed forces General Ioannis Davos.

That agreement was accepted by Greece but later modified by General Haig to meet Turkish demands. The revised plan was rejected by Greece in May 1979.

Greece and Turkey are at odds over territorial rights in the Aegean and air and sea control in the same area.

Greece's return to NATO is being blocked by Turkey, which wants to see the problem of control in the Aegean Sea settled first.

The original Haig-Davos plan recommended that problems related to the operational control in the Aegean should not be interconnected until after Greece's re-entry.

Diplomatic sources here said that the United States is eager to see Greece back in NATO's military structure in order to consolidate the alliance's south-eastern flank in view of the impending death of President Tito, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the crisis in American-Iranian relations.

The Greek leaders are expected

World News Briefs

ANKARA, April 8 (R) -- A high-ranking government official was shot and seriously wounded in central Ankara today, police said. Mr. Bulent Ozturkmen, deputy undersecretary of the Trade Ministry, was attacked while riding in his chauffeur-driven car. The gunman escaped. Attacks against high-ranking government officials are uncommon in Turkey. Gunbattles between right and left-wing extremists claim an average of seven lives a day but involve mainly students, workers and militants.

SUVA, Fiji, April 8 (AP) -- Fiji's Ministry of Health today said into flood-stricken areas of the island of Viti Levu with a campaign to immunise flood victims against possible disease. A cyclone with torrential rain, floods and landslides caused heavy damage in a wide area around Suva, the capital, over Easter. The confirmed death toll rose to 16 today, with several others missing and presumed dead. A broadcast over Radio Fiji today, Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamis Mara said damage was "colossal" and the government did not have the means to give help to everyone needing it. "Fiji has suffered from severe hurricanes in the past but never have we experienced a succession of disastrous cyclones in so short a time," he said. The count had still not recovered from hurricane Meli in March 1979. Earlier this year, cyclone Wally came only a week after cyclone Tia. Mr. Mara said the United States had joined Australia and New Zealand in supplying aid with an immediate \$25,000 grant.

NEW DELHI, April 8 (R) -- Indian Premier Indira Gandhi today made a personal appeal to her cabinet ministers to live a more austere life. In letters to her colleagues, she asked them to set an example by avoiding wasteful spending and display of wealth. She discouraged elaborate dinners in both private and public functions. "We can be hospitable without showing off. We can be friendly without flattery and without extravagance," she said. Mrs. Gandhi, who opened a conference here of state governors and ministers, also appealed to the nation to practise austerity at a time when some essential commodities were not available and a severe drought was causing suffering in most states.

OSCHATZ, East Germany, April 8 (R) -- The Soviet Union today pulled an artillery unit out of East Germany as part of a 500 troop and tank withdrawal promised by President Le Brezhnev. About 100 Soviet soldiers, 18 heavy artillery guns and eight lorries left by rail from this small town northeast of Liepzig. President Brezhnev said in East Berlin last October that up to 20 Soviet troops and 1,000 tanks would be withdrawn from East Germany within a year. The pull-out began last December and units were withdrawn in February. According to Western estimates the Soviet Union had more than 370,000 troops and 7,000 tanks in East Germany when President Brezhnev announced the withdrawal. Lieutenant-General Vyacheslav Gordiyenko, deputy commander-in-chief of Soviet forces in East Germany, watched yesterday's withdrawal ceremony, which included speeches attacking the policies of the Western military alliance. Western journalists brought to Oshatz by bus from East Berlin, have been invited to witness another pull-out of Soviet troops on April 16.

LONDON, April 8 (R) -- Queen Elizabeth has decorated a helicopter pilot of Britain's Royal Air Force for braving a savage blizzard on Olympus Mountains of Cyprus to rescue a seriously ill baby girl. Flight Lieutenant John Francis Martin Kaye, 33, serving in Nicosia, part of the United Nations peacekeeping force, who receives Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in the Air. The British Defence Ministry today said the pilot, flying in heavy snow, had to make three attempts on Jan. 5 before rescuing a baby from a remote village, and if it had not been for his gallantry would have died.

Pakistan opposition party defies Zia's ban on political activity

KARACHI, April 8 (R) -- The policy-making body of Pakistan's opposition centrist Tehrik Istiqlal party met during the weekend in defiance of President Zia Ul Haq's ban on political activity and passed resolutions demanding an end to martial law and the release of all political prisoners.

The party's leader, retired air marshal Asghar Khan, is under house arrest in Abbottabad, a garrison town in Pakistan's north-west frontier province. A petition challenging his detention and the legality of General Zia's military government is being heard in the Punjab provincial high court in Lahore.

His lawyer and acting president of the party, Mr. Mian Mahmud Ali Kasuri, met 65 members of the

Tehrik central working committee in Lahore on Saturday and Sunday ostensibly to discuss the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan and its effect on Pakistan, party sources reported here.

They said the committee agreed that Pakistan's "non-elected, unrepresentative and unpopular military regime" was not equipped to meet the wide-ranging challenges that the Soviet action posed to the country. The committee demanded that martial law be lifted immediately and the armed forces return to their duty of defending Pakistan.

The politicians called for immediate elections on a direct adult franchise for both national and provincial assemblies and ruled that General Zia had no mandate to make changes in the country's 1973 constitution.

General Zia, in his efforts to establish power bases outside Pakistan's traditional political parties, has put forward several suggestions for restricting the franchise and proposed proportional representation in addition to the setting up of various advisory bodies of different pressure groups. All his efforts have been rejected by the political parties including his former supporters.

The Tehrik central working committee demanded that the three major political party leaders still in detention, Mr. Asghar Khan and Mrs. Begum Nusrat Bhutto and her daughter Benazir, who lead the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) of executed prime minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, be released immediately along with

other politicians, party workers and students in jail.

Mrs. Bhutto and Miss Bhutto are due to appear in court in Karachi tomorrow in connection with their petition challenging their detention. They were arrested at the same time as Mr. Asghar Khan in October last year when General Zia cancelled general elections he had promised in November, outlawed all political parties, banned political activity and imposed a more rigorous form of martial law.

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Brezhnev: No plans to step down

By Robert Evans

MOSCOW -- Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev issued a clear signal this week that he has no plans to step down despite advancing age and recurring ill-health.

In an apparently buoyant mood, the 73-year-old president and Communist Party chief told a Moscow meeting of top officials that he was determined to devote all his strength to raising living standards at home and defending

of our country and the whole of mankind."

Mr. Brezhnev appeared for the occasion after three weeks away from the public view during which he -- and other members of the party's ruling 14-man politburo -- missed functions they could have been expected to attend.

The prize-giving itself, although not announced in advance, was reliably reported to have been postponed for a week, apparently because the Kremlin chief's doctors advised him against extending himself.

The exact nature of Mr. Brezhnev's ailments is still uncertain, although there seems little doubt that he frequently succumbs

to heavy colds and influenza.

Officially, nothing is said on the topic and there are occasional signs that efforts are made to present him to the public as healthier than he actually is.

In the televised version of this week's ceremony, he spoke much more quickly and even more clearly than he has done for a decade, and moved surprisingly rapidly in turning over the pages of his text, prompting some speculation that the recording may have been played back at a slightly higher speed.

But although Mr. Brezhnev himself spoke of the rapid passing of time and the need to pass on accumulated experience to the young generation, there was no sense that his own departure might be imminent or even under consideration.

1980, the president declared, was to be dedicated to active preparation for next year's 26th party

congress which would determine "the strategy of our further movement ahead on the road of communist construction."

If Mr. Brezhnev were planning to become the first Kremlin number one to step down voluntarily and in good standing, the congress would provide a suitable occasion, coming almost certainly at the end of next winter.

The gathering, to be attended by some 5,000 delegates from all parts of the Soviet Union, nominally elects the politburo and the Central Committee, the party's parliament, of which he is general secretary.

But there is no sign of any preparation for such an eventuality -- either in the form of unusual public exposure of any potential new leader or of any real pressure on Mr. Brezhnev from his colleagues.

Despite economic problems reflected in a slowing of growth rates and the souring of the detente relationship with the United States, Soviet officials continue to exude confidence that history is on their side.

Although some intellectuals recount scathing jokes about the ageing leadership and ordinary Russians complain of erratic food supplies, there is no feeling in Moscow of momentous events in the air.

While there has been widespread speculation in the West that the intervention in Afghanistan may have been a miscalculation, in Moscow it appears more of a demonstration of Kremlin dedication to acting firmly in the pursuit of Soviet interests.

The move has been coupled with a clear declaration of Kremlin intent to aid any left-wing regime that might appear in danger from what Moscow sees as "counter-revolutionary forces" to the best of Russian ability anywhere in the world.

In private, Soviet insiders contrast this determination with what they see as weakness and lack of self-confidence in Washington and overall disarray in the Western alliance as displayed in reaction to the Afghan affair.

On the home front, the Soviet authorities have effectively decapitated the amorphous dissident movement by despatching physicist Andrei Sakharov into provincial exile and arresting many of the leading dissenters.

Mr. Brezhnev himself subjected a number of the country's economic ministers to severe public criticism in a major speech last November which was one of

the frankest addresses ever by a Kremlin chief on this subject. But implicit in his blast was a message that the named officials, some of whom are personally close to him, had a period of perhaps until the party congress to put their respective houses in order.

Just how long the present line-up can survive present form therefore largely depends on the health of the top men in the Kremlin.

Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin, 76, suffered a severe heart attack last October which one pronounced surgeon who attended described privately as "a case to show my students."

Although recovered enough to resume occasional public appearances and to undergo an operation in March for the removal of a cataract.

Mr. Andrei Kirilenko, 70, substitutes for Mr. Brezhnev party role and recently also in for Mr. Kosygin in economic talks with a visiting delegation from Nicaragua, appears to be the top four, whose age is 75. Mr. Brezhnev youngest -- by a few months -- junior of Mr. Kirilenko, the able temporary successor to Kremlin chief to be struck.

But there is still no indication of any obvious candidate to Mr. Brezhnev -- now the 11th serving top Soviet leader from Stalin.

Over recent weeks, Minister Andrei Gromyko, Defence Minister Dmitry Ustinov have appeared to be unusually prominent role both have backgrounds limited by their specialties -- and by over 70.

If, as seems certain, one of the members of the present line-up is to be replaced by a younger man, then only a succession would be possible unless Leningrad's 56-year-old party chief Grigory Yavlinskii could move to the fore.

However, Mr. Romano is in the party organisation side his home city and none in dealing with foreign relations in a period when the Kremlin must inevitably play a major role in conducting external relations.

REUTERS



Leonid Brezhnev (Gamma photo)

world peace.

His leadership colleagues on the platform, as well as other speakers at the meeting, called to present Mr. Brezhnev with a state prize for literature, implicitly endorsing his determination to stay at the helm.

As seen in a recording of the occasion televised throughout the country later in the day, he was resoundingly applauded for a pledge to "continue in the future doing everything in my power to implement successfully our party's Leninist policy."

He also promised to try to find time among his other duties to continue writing his autobiography, the first three instalments of which were officially hailed as great works and brought him the prize.

War veterans, scientists and cultural figures who spoke at the ceremony wished him "strong health ... further increasing creative energy and success ... for the good

of our country and the whole of mankind."

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If Mr. Brezhnev were planning to become the first Kremlin number one to step down voluntarily and in good standing, the congress would provide a suitable occasion, coming almost certainly at the end of next winter.

The gathering, to be attended by some 5,000 delegates from all parts of the Soviet Union, nominally elects the politburo and the Central Committee, the party's parliament, of which he is general secretary.

But there is no sign of any preparation for such an eventuality -- either in the form of unusual public exposure of any potential new leader or of any real pressure on Mr. Brezhnev from his colleagues.

Despite economic problems reflected in a slowing of growth rates and the souring of the detente relationship with the United States, Soviet officials continue to exude confidence that history is on their side.

Although some intellectuals recount scathing jokes about the ageing leadership and ordinary Russians complain of erratic food supplies, there is no feeling in Moscow of momentous events in the air.

While there has been widespread speculation in the West that the intervention in Afghanistan may have been a miscalculation, in Moscow it appears more of a demonstration of Kremlin dedication to acting firmly in the pursuit of Soviet interests.

The move has been coupled with a clear declaration of Kremlin intent to aid any left-wing regime that might appear in danger from what Moscow sees as "counter-revolutionary forces" to the best of Russian ability anywhere in the world.

In private, Soviet insiders contrast this determination with what they see as weakness and lack of self-confidence in Washington and overall disarray in the Western alliance as displayed in reaction to the Afghan affair.

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